

WE CLAIM:

1. A method for installing systems management software on a host device to be remotely monitored, comprising:

5 communicatingly linking an installation station and the host device, wherein the host device is positioned remote from the installation station;

receiving over the communication link at the installation station computing environment information for the host device;

10 loading an installation tool configured to automatically install the systems management software on the host device;

transmitting a software payload comprising the systems management software from the installation station 15 to the host device;

first operating the installation tool to automatically install the software payload on the host device; and

20 second operating the installation tool to automatically configure the installed software payload based on the computing environment information.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the computing environment information includes information selected from the group consisting of host information, identification of modules for monitoring the host device, 5 thresholds based on configuration of the host device, and installation commands to run during the first operating.

3. The method of claim 1, further including loading a survey tool on the host device and running the survey tool to automatically gather the computing environment information.

4. The method of claim 3, further including prior to the installation tool loading and the survey tool loading, transmitting the installation tool and the survey tool from the installation station to the host device.

5. The method of claim 3, wherein the survey tool is configured to create an extensible markup language (XML) descriptor file including the computing environment information.

6. The method of claim 1, further including providing the installation station with access to a data storage device storing differing ones of the systems management software and with the installation station, 5 selecting the software payload from the differing ones based on the received computing environment information.

7. A method of deploying systems management software within a network including multiple managed hosts, comprising:

5 positioning an installation station within the network, wherein the installation station includes data storage for storing the systems management software and is in communication with a first and a second one of the managed hosts;

10 at the first and the second ones, downloading a survey tool from the installation station;

executing the downloaded survey tools to gather environment information for the first and second ones and to create output files comprising the gathered environment information;

15 at the first and the second ones, downloading an installation tool from the installation station;

transmitting the output files from the first and second ones to the installation station;

20 in response to receiving the output files, transferring a payload of the systems management software to the first and second ones; and

at the first and second ones, installing the transferred payloads with the installation tool.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the survey tool downloading, the executing, the installation tool downloading, the transmitting, and the installing occur at least partially concurrently at the first and the 5 second ones of the managed hosts.

9. The method of claim 8, further including transmitting from the first and second ones an installation initiation request to the installation station and in response to receiving the installation 5 requests, establishing with the installation station a first active installation session and a second active installation session for remotely and concurrently managing the transferring and the installing of the payloads.

10. The method of claim 7, wherein the gathered environment information for the first one differs from the gathered environment information for the second one and further including prior to the transferring, 5 selecting a first portion of the systems management software for inclusion in the payload to the first one based on the gathered environment information and selecting a second portion of the systems management software for inclusion in the payload to the second one 10 based on the gathered environment information.

11. The method of claim 10, further including after the installing of the transferred payloads, configuring the installed payloads at the first and second ones based on the differing environment information.

12. The method of claim 7, further including allocating network addresses to network devices associated with the first and second ones.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the network address allocating is performed at least partially concurrently with the installing and wherein network addresses are selected from network addresses preprogrammed into a router based on a forecasted number of the associated network devices.

14. A networked method for automatically deploying and installing agent software in a network computer device, comprising:

5 communicatively linking an installation station via a communications network to the network computer device;

 downloading a survey script from the installation station onto the network computer device;

10 executing the survey script to automatically create an output file defining a computing environment for the network computer device;

 downloading an installation Daemon from the installation station onto the network computer device;

 using the installation Daemon to retrieve the output file and transfer a copy of the output file to the installation station;

15 in response to receiving the copy, transferring the agent software to the network computer device over the communications network; and

automatically installing the agent software on the
20 network computer device with the installation Daemon.

15. The method of claim 14, further including performing modifications of the installed agent software based on the output file to enhance operation of the installed agent software.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein the output file includes information selected from the group consisting of network computer device hardware and software configuration information, identification of modules for 5 monitoring the network computer device, thresholds based on configuration of the network computer device, and installation commands for the installation Daemon to run during the installing.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the installation Daemon is adapted to create progress messages during the installing and wherein the progress messages are accessible by the network computer device.

18. A network system for remotely monitoring an operating computer system, comprising:

a managed host in the operating computer system linked to a communications network, the managed host 5 including a survey tool for automatically gathering environment information and an installation tool for transmitting the environment information over the communications network and for automatically installing systems management software on the managed host; and
10 an installation station linked to the communications network configured to receive the environment information and in response to transmit a payload of the systems management software to the managed host.

19. The system of claim 18, wherein the installation tool is further configured to modify the installed systems management software based on the environment information.

20. The system of claim 18, wherein the installation station processes the environment information to select the payload to match the environment information.

21. The system of claim 18, further including a remote service linked to the communications network and operable to monitor operations of the computer system via execution of the installed systems management software on the managed host.

22. The system of claim 21, wherein the installation tool functions to generate an installation report and transmit the installation report to the installation station, wherein the installation station functions in response to the installation report to transmit a request for approval of adding the managed host to the network system to the remote service, and wherein the remote service responds to the request for approval by determining whether to begin monitoring the managed host.